

JORDAN TIMES

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جورن تايمز يومية سياسية تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الاردنية « الراي »

AMMAN, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 1978 — RABIE AWAL 20, 1398



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France will protect Djibouti

WASHINGTON, Feb. 27 (AP). — France would use troops to protect Djibouti from being engulfed in the conflict in the Horn of Africa, the French Ambassador to the U.S. said today. But he said Western nations could do much at this time to help Somalia, because Somalia is the aggressor in the conflict. Ambassador Francois de Laboulaye said France has 4,000 troops in Djibouti, a tiny but strategically located nation nestled between Ethiopia and Somalia on the Red Sea. It became independent from France last year. Mr. de Laboulaye said those troops would not cross the Djibouti border and participate in the wider Horn of Africa conflict.

Volume 3, Number 689

Owen: Mideast peace momentum picking up

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM, Feb. 27 (AP). — Britain's Foreign Secretary David Owen today met with Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin and said afterwards he thought the momentum of the East peace process was picking up. Owen, here on a two-day visit, met Mr. Begin shortly after the Israeli leader conferred with United States special envoy Alfred Atherton on Egypt's latest proposal for a declaration of peace.

Mr. Owen believed the momentum of the peace initiative is still the same, Mr. Owen told reporters. "I get the feeling the momentum is very much the same," he said.

visit came as Egypt was trying to harden its position on a declaration of principle. During the morning Dr. Begin's visit to Mr. Atherton who was leaving for Cairo for the latest Israeli counter-attacks.

Owen said he thought Israeli peace plan put forward at the Ismailia summit in December still remained a good framework for negotiations.

Mr. Owen said he expected the Israeli side can expect to get a lot of support from the Arab side before arriving in Israel. He said he did not believe the Jordanians were yet to join in the peace talks.

Mr. Owen said he thought Israel should be reminded Jordan that the peace plan for self-rule on the occupied West Bank, a concept proposed by Jordan, was initially as a five-year measure.

Mr. Owen has argued that Israel might be more disposed to peace talks if it could see that this plan was temporary.

Mr. Owen said he did not believe he had not heard of his plan being watered down or whether Jordan was prepared to break with

Syria so as to join peace talks. Dr. Owen said: "No, I was given no indication of their intention. I think they are not going to make up their mind until they see a declaration of principles and until they get greater clarifications."

"I think they are very cautious about this and I think they don't believe it necessarily requires a breaking from Syria. I think they want to see that the principles are broad enough based and comprehensive enough so it would be possible for Syria to come even if they decided not to do so."

During the day Dr. Owen also met Defence Minister Ezer Weizman, former Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and former Foreign Minister Yigal Alon. He leaves for home tomorrow. Yesterday he met Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan.

Owen hints of role for U.N. At a press conference tonight Dr. Owen said he found it very difficult to see how progress could be made on the West Bank problem without Jordanian participation.

But he said: "It is not the British position that we should now, at this moment in time, be putting pressure on Jordan."

The foreign secretary said he had not spent much time discussing with Mr. Begin the issue of Jewish settlement on Arab land. "But I understand," he said, "how difficult it would be for Mr. Begin to ask people to leave, to say 'You will leave'. That's difficult."

Dr. Owen said Britain agreed with the American view that these settlements were illegal and an obstacle to peace.

But he said that if settlements could be seen as areas integrated in their surroundings, accepting local administration, then some outside agency such as the United Nations might, if necessary, take over their defence.

As for the Israeli settlements in northern Sinai, Dr. Owen said he did not believe they would serve any great security purpose provided Sinai as a whole was demilitarized with Egyptian forces remaining west of the Giddi an Mitla passes.



A police van backs up to the entrance of a Nicosia court Monday to deliver two Arabs accused of assassinating prominent Egyptian newspaper editor Youssef Sibai on Feb. 18. Unprecedented security measures were in force for a preliminary hearing. The two Arabs, Samir Mohammad Khadar, 28, and Zayed Hussein Ahmad Al Ali, 26, travelling on a Jordanian and a Kuwaiti passport respectively, are charged with the premeditated murder of Youssef Sibai, editor in chief of Al Ahram. Sibai was shot in Nicosia's Hilton Hotel on Feb. 18, while attending an Afro-Asian solidarity conference. The Sibai murder set the stage for a bloody shootout at Larnaca airport the following day, when 15 Egyptian commandos were killed by Cypriot troops while trying to storm a plane in which the two accused were holding 11 Arab hostages. The airport incident led to Egypt's rupture of diplomatic relations with Cyprus. Egyptian Ambassador Hassan Shash left Cyprus Sunday for Cairo with three of his diplomatic staff and their dependents. Mr. Shash however left behind First Secretary Mohammed Naguib to look after Egypt's affairs on the island. The Egyptian Defence Attache, who also remained behind until two Egyptian commandos injured in the airport shoot-out were well enough to travel, Judge Peter Michaelides appointed Lefcos Clerides, a prominent Cypriot criminal lawyer and Chairman of the Cyprus Bar Council, to defend the accused. (AP wirephoto)

Israeli cabinet shies away from calling a halt to settlements

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM, Feb. 27 (AP). — The Israeli government yesterday resolved not to change its controversial policy of settling Jews in occupied Arab land.

Asked whether new settlements would go up in the near future, Cabinet Secretary Aryeh Na'or said: "We'll wait and see."

A marathon debate on settlement, which stretched over two cabinet sessions, split the 19 ministers between those who sought to placate the United States and Arab neighbours by halting settlements, and those who wanted to speed up their construction.

The cabinet ruled that "it does not need new decisions" on settlements. Its last debate on the issue, seven weeks ago, ended with a resolution to expand existing settlements in northeast Sinai without building new ones.

It has also decided to build three new settlements in the occupied West Bank this year.

"There is no change in government policy," said Mr. Na'or. The latest decision came in the midst of U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Alfred Atherton's diplomatic shuttle between Egypt and Israel aimed at renewing peace talks.

Some ministers, led by Defence Minister Ezer Weizman, wanted to freeze settlement projects in view of American complaints that they were "an obstacle to peace."

Mr. Na'or left the impression that the cabinet was far from unanimous. His refusal to say how broadly the resolution was supported appeared to underscore the divisions among the ministers over settlement policy.

A hawkish action led by Agriculture Minister Ariel Sharon wanted the cabinet to approve a mass settlement campaign in Sinai and the West Bank.

Mr. Na'or said work would continue "regarding existing settlements," but added: "As far as I know there is no plan for setting up settlements in Sinai."

He reaffirmed, however, Israel's intention of putting up three outposts in the West Bank this year.

Meanwhile, Israeli troops blocked right-wing demonstrators led by American-Israeli Rabbi Meir Kahane from occupying a building in the occupied West Bank town of Hebron.

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Egypt to strip Palestinians of special rights

CAIRO, Feb. 27 (R). — Egypt, incensed by the murder of prominent journalist Youssef Sibai, today stripped Palestinians living in Egypt of special rights they had enjoyed for over 20 years.

Prime Minister Mamdouh Salem announced in parliament: "The status of the Palestinians in Egypt will henceforth be reviewed."

"The government will submit to parliament measures that will put the Palestinian nationals living in Egypt in their natural status and will make them equal to the citizens of other brotherly Arab nations living here," Mr. Salem said.

Mr. Sibai was shot dead by two Arabs in Nicosia nine days ago.

Since the 1956 Suez Canal crisis, about 150,000 Palestinians living in Egypt have enjoyed the same living conditions, legal and professional rights — but not political rights — as Egyptian citizens.

Palestinians will now have to acquire residence visas and make foreign currency transfers to enter Egypt, one official said.

Senior Palestinian officials said they expected Palestinians would be forbidden to own land or private enterprises and would be subject to higher taxes.

At present several Palestinian families own pastry factories, aluminium and crystal plants and many others are prominent businessmen.

Mr. Salem accused Palestinian leaders of "selling themselves" to the Arab rejectionists. He was referring to Syria, the Libyan Jamahiriya, Iraq, Algeria and South Yemen, which oppose Egypt's peace overtures to Israel.

"(They) must bear the consequences resulting from this stand," he told parliament. Mr. Salem accused the rejectionists of plotting against Egypt to foil Egypt's peace initiatives.

The killing of Mr. Sibai was the beginning of a chain of other measures planned by Arab rejectionists to detract attention away from President Anwar Sadat's peace moves," he said. The prime minister said the two gunmen had admitted they were Palestinians.

The prime minister said Egypt would not forget Palestinians who backed Egypt's Middle East peace moves. It still supported the right of Palestinians to set up an independent state, he added.

War Minister Abdul Ghani Gamassi accused Cyprus of being negative and casual about the killing of Mr. Sibai. He said this had promoted Egypt to send in commandos on an ill-fated raid on Larnaca airport to release hostages held by the two Arab gunmen.

"It was necessary to intervene militarily once the plane landed at Larnaca to put an end to terrorism," Gen. Gamassi said.

Prime Minister Salem said the Syrian military attaché who was in the room when Mr. Sibai was killed talked to the two gunmen. He had told the Cypriot authorities the assassins were Eritreans despite the fact they had admitted they were Palestinians, he said.

Gen. Gamassi forecast further killings. "Other operations are ahead of us. The armed forces will remain alert and ready to protect Egypt's security, sacrificing effort, sweat and blood," he said.

Prime Minister Salem said the Syrian military attaché who was in the room when Mr. Sibai was killed talked to the two gunmen. He had told the Cypriot authorities the assassins were Eritreans despite the fact they had admitted they were Palestinians, he said.

Two Arabs appeared in court in Nicosia today, accused of Mr. Sibai's murder. Cyprus has refused Egypt's demand for their extradition, promoting Egypt to sever diplomatic links.

Mr. Salem told parliament: "Cyprus authorities were informed fully of the Evrotta commando unit's mission. But the Cypriot authorities chose to fire at their backs once they started their mission 90 minutes

after they landed at Larnaca." Cyprus has denied it was informed of the operation which it considers an attack against its sovereignty.

Interior Minister Nabawi Ismail told parliament Egypt had taken steps to ensure security. "We will not permit the killing of another Egyptian," he said.

Egypt's stand on Palestinian rights unchanged

Prime Minister Salem said in his address: "Egypt will not forget the Palestinians living inside the occupied Arab territories who support President Sadat's peace moves."

"The Palestinians living inside the occupied territories sent their representatives to Egypt and voiced their support for Egypt's moves," he said.

"Egypt will not forget these Palestinians. We will not leave them alone to face the other Palestinians who are trying to trade in Palestinian rights."

But he said Egypt would continue to support Palestinian rights to an independent state. "Egypt's struggle for the sake of Palestinian rights in the West Bank of Jordan, Jerusalem and Gaza Strip will continue. It is a historic and strategic position which will not change," Mr. Salem said.

"We will not allow anybody to exploit the situation against the interests of the Palestinians," he said.

AMMAN, Feb. 27 (Agencies). — Jordan might join direct peace talks between Egypt and Israel if the Jewish state committed itself to total withdrawal from occupied Arab lands and recognised the national rights of the Palestinians to self-determination, Prime Minister Mudar Badran said Sunday.

He said in an interview published in the Kuwait daily newspaper Al Ra'i Al Aam that Jordan would not yield to pressure to take part in the now stalled negotiations.

But he said that Jordan might join the peace talks after consultations with other Arab parties, including the Palestinians, on conditions allowing the Palestinians to determine their future in full freedom.

Premier Badran reiterated Jordan's rejection of Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin's proposals to give limited home rule to Arabs on the occupied West Bank and the Gaza Strip. This plan was aimed at perpetuating the Israeli occupation, he said.

Premier Badran said Jordan was supporting the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) in its struggle for the restoration of the Palestinians' rights.

There had been no break in the dialogue between Jordan and the PLO he said adding: "There are unannounced contacts between the two sides, which their interests required not to make public."

Referring to relations with Syria Mr. Badran said that consultations between His Majesty King Hussein and President Hafez Assad had never stopped. He described relations between the two countries as good.

Highlighting Jordan's heavy responsibilities as a front-line country, Premier Badran said whereas Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are fulfilling their responsibilities for financial aid to Jordan, other Arab countries have broken their promises made under the Rabat summit resolutions.

Abba Eban joins in concerted attack on Begin's peace tactics

TEL AVIV, Feb. 27 (R). — Former Foreign Minister Abba Eban yesterday joined former Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in what observers regarded as a concerted attack on the negotiating methods and policies of Prime Minister Menachem Begin's Likud government.

Mr. Rabin Saturday criticised the Likud government's actions in establishing new settlements in Arab areas, saying they were largely responsible for the delays in the peace-making process.

Addressing a Labour party think-tank forum yesterday Mr. Eban referred to new villages established near Rafah in northern Sinai while the talks were in progress and said: "Either one thing or the other. That region is either essential for us from the defence viewpoint, or it is not essential."

"If it is essential, we should have asked for border changes under U.N. Security Council Resolution 242 for which we fought hard to preserve the justice of our claim for border amendments."

"But the contradiction between the stress on defence and

Atherton: Resumption of direct talks not top item on agenda

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM, Feb. 27 (AP). — Israel today offered parts of Egypt's latest peace plan as a declaration of principle, but it was not a declaration of principle, said Atherton, counter-propaganda spokesman at the weekend, said a distinct hardening of the Israeli position at the weekend, disrupted foreign ministers' meetings in Jerusalem last month.

Minister Menachem Begin told reporters parts of the plan were negotiable. One paragraph, identical in both sides, was completely acceptable, but Israel wanted changes.

Atherton and Begin declined to go into the substance of the proposals and said: "There is reason to believe negotiations will go forward."

After meeting him, the U.S. said: "We discussed the

concrete proposals I brought with me from Egypt. I received from the prime minister, the foreign minister and his colleagues concrete suggestions which I will take back with me to Cairo with respect to the declaration of principles."

Mr. Atherton said he would return to Egypt tomorrow and possibly come back here on Thursday.

DAMASCUS WILL NOT RECEIVE ATHERTON

DAMASCUS, Feb. 27 (AP). — Syria has refused to meet President Carter's special envoy, Alfred Atherton, "because his present mission does not serve the cause of a just and lasting peace."

The government newspaper Tichrin said Mr. Atherton's current tour through the Middle East "does not concern us any way."

He told reporters that a resumption of direct Egyptian-Israeli peace talks "is not currently at the top of the agenda."

Mr. Begin said: "Some of the paragraphs suggested to us can be negotiated by us. One paragraph was completely acceptable. This was completely identical in both drafts, the Egyptian and Israeli ones. On some paragraphs we proposed changes."

Mr. Begin reiterated that Israel could not accept as preconditions for negotiations demands for total Israeli withdrawal from land occupied in 1967 and for the creation of a Palestinian state.

Mr. Atherton said he did not want to characterise each meeting in terms of progress or lack of it.

He admitted there was a gap but said he had not heard the word reject used by either side in connection with the other's proposals, each side was making serious efforts to narrow the gap.

Following investigations into the death of a West Bank Arab and injuries to another West Bank woman in an explosion on the Hebrew University campus here a week ago. It has been said that investigations showed it was caused by the premature explosion of a charge hidden inside a thick book the man was carrying.

Three Arabs suspected of being members of the Fatah organisation were arrested while preparing a booby-trapped car to explode in the centre of Jerusalem, police said yesterday.

A police spokesman said the three were found in possession of large quantities of "sabotage equipment," but he did not indicate when the arrests were made.

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World News Roundup

Arab divisiveness biggest issue in peace effort claims Herzog

SON, Arizona, Feb. 27 (AP). — A peace agreement between Egypt and Israel would not be that significant because of divisions among Arab nations, says Israel's ambassador to the United Nations, Ambassador Chaim Herzog, speaking at the University of Arizona Sunday night, said the Arab divisiveness remains the biggest issue in efforts to gain peace in the Middle East.

U.S. decision on Mideast arms sales seen by Egypt as aid to peace process

CAIRO, Feb. 27 (R). — The Speaker of the Egyptian Peoples' assembly (parliament) Mr. Sayed Marei, said yesterday the decision to sell fighter planes to Egypt represented "a

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The Jordan Times is published daily except Mondays. Advertising and subscription rates are available from the Jordan Times advertising dept.

New centre maps Jordan for planners

By John Rigg
 Special to the Jordan Times

The Director of the Jordan National Geographic Centre which was established in 1975, Lt-Col. Al Majali told the Jordan Times that it was created to cope with the increasing demand for maps by the country's development planners. Development projects of all kinds must have a basic framework in order for the planning stages to proceed, and this is created by and large, through the accumulation of information gleaned from up-to-date maps and charts. Jordan in particular, with its rapid growth during the current Five Year Plan, relies heavily on city, regional and national maps that are current and easily accessible.

It was first initiated, in October 1975, as part of a joint technical-cultural co-operation agreement between the French and Jordanian governments, and includes a training scheme which is actually the crux of the whole centre. "First and foremost," says Lt-Col. Majali, "I am concentrating, and will continue to concentrate, on a high standard of training. We cannot rely on foreign expertise forever. Our people are now being trained to take over the work when the foreign teachers and experts decide to leave."

A training centre was created at Zarqa, where 200 Jordanian Survey Technicians will receive instruction over the next five years. The staff consists of four French experts, who are permanently stationed there, but visiting lecturers from France are also rotated every three or four months.

Intensive course

It is an extremely intensive course for both men and women and covers four semesters each of 54 months duration. Trainees are accepted only at the beginning of the two year diploma course. Unlike most universities, the Zarqa training centre completes its programme before enrolment begins again. Candidates are chosen from students who have successfully completed their Jordanian Matriculation in Science. The curriculum includes the study of Topography, Cosmography, Photogrammetry (aerial photography), Drafting, Mathematics, Cartography, Geology, and the study of the French and English languages.

In fact, the course is so intensive that the accumulated credit hours equal those of a Masters Degree. Last December, the first group of 19 men and 18 women received their graduation diplomas, while another enrolment of 60 students were already at work in their first month of training. Lt-Col. Majali says, "This graduation is the most important achievement of the centre to date. It was the first group of trainees in this field who were totally trained in Jordan."

This technological-cultural cooperation between the French and Jordanians also allows for promising trainees to be given scholarships which will enable them to study at the Institute Geographique Nationale in Paris. Here, they may continue studying for periods ranging from two to six years, and it is hoped, that they'll eventually return to Jordan to take over all the country's mapping needs.

At the moment, the National Geographic Centre handles about 40 per cent of the map work in Jordan. The rest is handled by a French company based in Amman.

The French Mapping Group, as it is called, is an alliance between the Institute Geographique Nationale and the Compagnie d'Etude et de Topographie. Both are Paris based companies who train geographical technicians.

Through an agreement included in the centre's 1975 charter, the French were given exclusivity with regards to Jo-

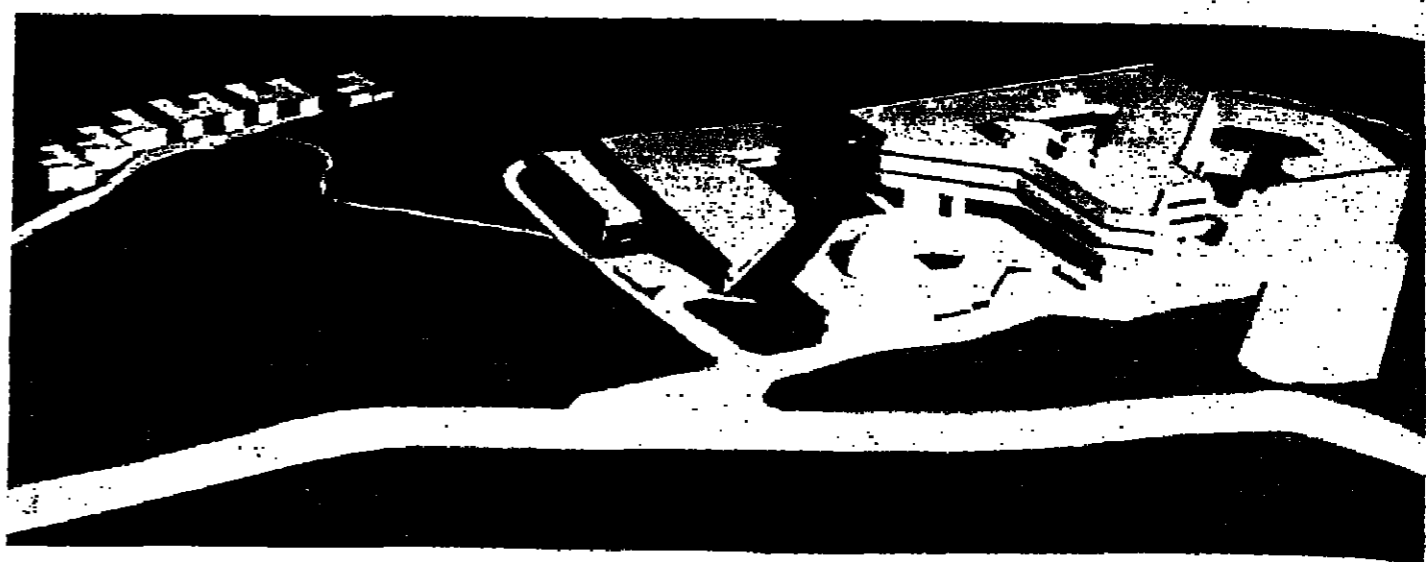
rdanian government mapping projects. This exclusivity simply means that if certain projects can not be handled by the National Geographic Centre, the French Mapping Group would undertake them, if the project was financed by Jordan. In this way, Jordan is free to accept the services of any foreign country who could carry out the work and bear the cost.

Students collect data

Some projects that have been carried out have used students from the centre itself. In 1977, a "Land Use Survey" of Amman utilised the trainees to gather data. It was a monumental task and required the trainees to visit all houses, businesses, hospitals, land-owners, public and private institutions, etc. Its purpose was to find out exactly how each plot of land in the city is used. The trainees also helped to plan land use surveys and ortho-photographs (aerial photography that gives a vertical rather than a perspective view) for ten Jordanian cities.

Lt-Col. Majali doesn't believe in giving his trainees imaginary projects. He feels that at the present stage of Jordan's development it is a concept that is rather wasteful. Productive projects are, anyway, much more beneficial to the trainees.

Although the centre's priorities lie first with Jordan's mapping needs, neighboring Arab countries will also be able to take advantage of this special type of work. Most other Arab



An artist's impression of the new centre.

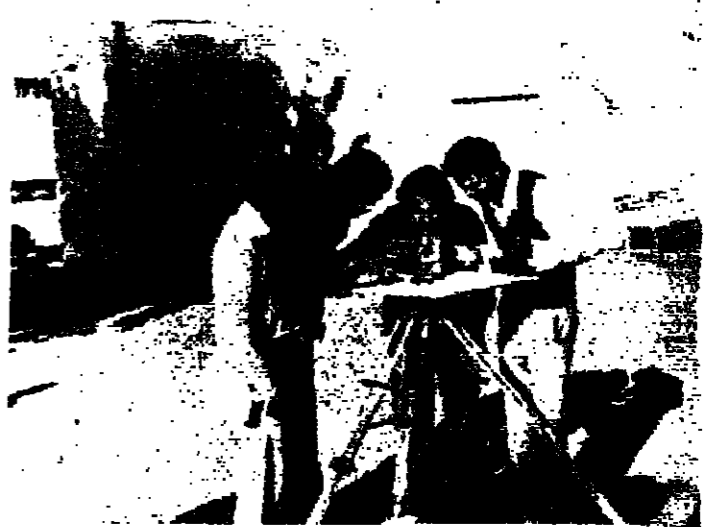
countries lack facilities for accurate and detailed mapping and often have to rely upon foreign companies to fill this gap.

This results in a leakage of geographic, economic, and strategic information as well as being a costly venture. It is therefore advantageous for Jordan to corner the market and at the same time to strengthen ties between itself and the Arab community.

Looking to the future, plans have been prepared, and indeed, excavations have begun on

the Jordanian National Geographic Centre compound.

It will cost an estimated JD 3 million and will be erected on the grounds of the Royal Scientific Society adjacent to the University of Jordan. The architect is Mr. Roger Tallibieri, who was the designer of the Olympic Stadium in Montreal. When it is completed in approximately two years time, it will house the Jordanian National Geographic Centre and the training centre, the focal point of its present work, which will be relocated from Zarqa.



Male trainees work with a plane table. This device can map out elevation on the spot.



M. Chenez, one of the French experts, advises a female trainee as she re-checks a photogrammetric survey map.

WHAT'S GOING ON

INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL MEETING

A meeting is being held this evening at 7:00 at the American Community School, to discuss the establishment of an International High School for the children of expatriates in Jordan. Interested parents are welcome to attend. For additional information, call Mr. Paul Smith, telephone 42934.



The emblem of the National Geographic Centre.

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 Children clothes

Thanks, but no thanks

One must feel disappointed by the public statements of British Foreign Secretary David Owen during his brief visit to Jordan Saturday. The two points he stressed most seem to us rather unworthy of so much stressing, the points being the need to keep the momentum of the peace talks going and the need to see Israeli proposals for so-called home rule in the West Bank and Gaza as interim arrangements to be valid for five years. If this is the best Dr. Owen had to say, then we think perhaps he has not said very much at all.

On the first count, Dr. Owen is putting himself in that camp that sees momentum as a substitute for achievement, a position totally unworthy of his person and his position. There comes a point beyond which momentum by itself becomes meaningless, and the frantic quest for momentum becomes pathetic. What we are after, and what Dr. Owen should be trying to help achieve, is real progress in the peace talks, which boils down to the principle of a full Israeli withdrawal from occupied Arab lands and recognition of Palestinian national rights -- two principles that have been accepted by the entire world, except for Israel. It behooves a major power such as Great Britain to drive this point home to the Israelis, and not as Dr. Owen seems to be doing, to sugarcoat Israeli intransigence by telling the Arabs that we should view things in five-year segments. Given Great Britain's past assurances to the Arabs about Palestinian rights and Zionist intentions in Palestine, we find it very difficult -- to put it charitably -- to take Dr. Owen's suggestions seriously.

On the second count, of taking the Begin proposals as being valid for a five-year period only, we think that the awesome precedent of institutionalising and legalising the Israeli occupying presence in the West Bank and Gaza for a five-year period in itself outweighs the very unconvincing nature of the five-year transitional period. We want an end to the occupation, not its compartmentalisation in neat five-year packages.

ARAB PRESS COMMENTARY

AL DUSTOUR said Monday that in his statements to the Kuwait daily Al Rai Al 'Aam, Prime Minister Mudar Badran focussed once again on Jordan's stand towards the Arab-Israeli conflict -- a stand based on firm and unbargainable principles. That is, total Israeli withdrawal from occupied Arab territory and respect of the Palestinians right to self-determination.

The newspaper says Israel's propaganda machine is trying to distort Jordan's position, but Premier Badran's pronouncements come in time to strip the Israeli stubbornness and place the impediments blocking peace squarely at Israel's door...

The Prime Minister, Al Dustour adds, spoke at length on Jordan's internal requirements as a frontline state. He thanked Saudi Arabia and Gulf states for their financial help, but felt it was his duty to call on other hesitant brotherly countries to fulfill their promises for help under the Arab summit resolutions.

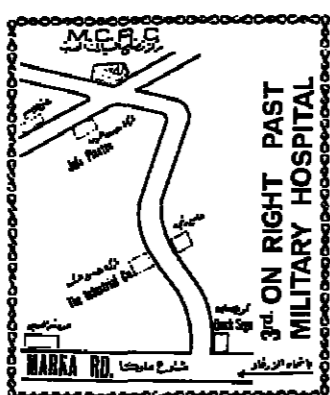
AL RA'I noted with amazement the discrepancy between Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan's statement the other day that Jordanian non-participation hinders the process of peace negotiations between Egypt and Israel and Israel's former Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin saying that it was Israel's headline which closed the door before Jordan's participation. Even, in the words of Mr. Rabin, Jordan would not get anything, if it took part in the negotiations.

Al Rai asks "in view of this apparent conflict of opinion between the Israeli government and the opposition, why, therefore, all this prattle about Jordan's attitude and the necessity of including Jordan in the negotiations?" The newspaper says the negotiators, who have not yet been able to change Israel's uncompromising attitude, should leave Jordan alone and search for more effective means of pressure to bear on Israel, if those really want just and lasting peace to prevail in the Middle East.

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Israel and human rights

This bulletin on the case of Safieh Salim Muhammad Musa was prepared by Ur Shlonsky, with the assistance of Attorney Lea Tsemel.

Safieh Salim Muhammad Musa is a 55-year old man from Ibwan, a village near Ramallah. A short time ago he returned to the Israeli occupied territories on a visit to Amman. She transported back to her a packet of cigarettes in which a report sent someone in Jordan to her son in Ramla prison,* lay concealed.

In a routine check carried-out at the prison, the report was discovered. On 3/7/77 Safieh was arrested and detained at Neve-Tirza prison for women. Safieh had previously known of the secret report hidden inside the cigarettes.**

On 3/9/77 Att. Lea Tsemel sent a letter to the Attorney General notifying him that she was representing Safieh. Att. Lea Tsemel was not notified of the hearing held on 12/9/77. Att. Tsemel was in the court house by sheer chance on that day and had to make her way into the courtroom.

We condemn the arrest of Safieh and her detention for such a lengthy period (over 2.5 months!) as a petty offence. We further criticize the authorities for their obvious circumvention of the law by not notifying the defendant's attorney of the hearing.

The authorities claim that they found 3 cigarettes marked with small dots inside of which lay concealed blue sheets of paper.

National News Roundup

Exports to India up 400 per cent

AMMAN, Feb. 27 (JNA). — Jordan's exports to India during October 1977 reached JD 574,000 in correspondence with JD 144,000 during the same month of 1976, an increase of 404 per cent. Sources at the statistics department added that Jordan's imports from India amounted to JD 122,000 in correspondence with JD 547,000 during the said period, a drop of 77 per cent. Rock phosphates topped the export list to India while imports from that country included frozen meats, tea, bags, iron and telex equipment.

Jordan to participate in world tourism meeting

AMMAN, Feb. 27 (JNA). — Jordan will participate in the meeting of the international conference for tourism and air transport, due to open in Canada on April 17, under the auspices of the World Tourism Organisation. The four day meeting will discuss tourism cooperation and coordination in air transportation among the member states. Jordan's delegation to the conference will be headed by Tourism and Antiquities Minister, Ghaleb Barakat.

19 million cub metres of water now behind dam

AMMAN, Feb. 27 (JNA). — Director General of the Jordan River Tributaries Corporation said yesterday that 19 million cubic metres of water was now being stored behind King Talal dam. He added that the corporation had started storing water behind the dam since February 1977 from floods and nearby wadis. The dam will eventually hold 58 million cubic metres to be used in the irrigation of 60,000 dunums in addition to supplying Amman with ten million cubic metres of drinking water.

Austrian envoy received

AMMAN, Feb. 27 (JNA). — Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hassan Ibrahim today received the new Austrian ambassador-designate to Jordan who arrived in Amman this morning. Mr. Ibrahim also received the Algerian ambassador in Beirut, Mohammad Yazeed, and the Iraqi Charge d'Affaires.

West Bank educational, cultural situation reviewed

AMMAN, Feb. 27 (JNA). — The Minister of Information, Adnan Abu Odeh, who is also acting Minister of Education, reviewed educational and cultural conditions in the occupied Arab territories and Israel's violations there, when he met with members of the United Nations Education, Science and Culture Organisation's (UNESCO) committee for collecting data on national education and culture in the occupied Arab areas. The committee members then split into three working groups and met with officials of the Ministry of Education and the Executive office of the Occupied Homeland Affairs to discuss educational conditions, curricula, text-books, vocational education, teachers and students affairs and those of writers, literary men and journalists in the occupied Arab areas. The five-member committee had visited the occupied areas two months ago and collected information about education there. The formation of the committee was decided by the 11th UNESCO General Assembly held in 1976 in Nairobi. The committee members, who arrived here yesterday on a few-days stay in Jordan, this afternoon visited development projects now being implemented in the Jordan Valley area.

Jordanian, Hungarian accord signed

BUDAPEST, Feb. 27 (JNA). — A Cultural and Scientific Cooperation Agreement between Jordan and Hungary was signed here today. Jordan's ambassador in Hungary, who signed the agreement, praised the two countries cooperation and friendly relations, notably in the economic and commercial fields. The Head of the Hungarian Scientific, Cultural and Technical Cooperation Department, who signed the agreement for his country, expressed his hope that the newly-signed accord will lead to good and positive results.

Foreign currency controls being finalised

AMMAN, Feb. 27 (JNA). — The Central Bank of Jordan is currently drawing up instructions in their final form to control foreign currency. These instructions have been sent in the form of notes to the licenced banks and concerned institutions at intervals. They include instructions to increase the authority of the licenced banks to issue foreign currency permits, and reduce routine work. The instructions will be distributed to the concerned banks and institutions this week.

New hotels licenced

AMMAN, Feb. 27 (JNA). — The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities today licenced two new hotels and a tourist and travel agency. It cancelled licence of an oriental antiques shop in Karak and a pension in Amman.



His Royal Highness, Crown Prince Hassan, the Viceroy, chats with Algerian envoy, Mr. Mohammad Yazeed at a meeting in Amman on Sunday. (JNA photo)

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Amman Stock Exchange Report

NAME OF COMPANY	Nominal share value	Volume traded	Opening price	Highest selling price	Lowest selling price	Closing price	Last buying bid	Last selling bid
Housing Bank	JD 1,000	2,420	1.100	1.100	1.100	1.100	1.050	—
Dar Al-Dawa' for Investment and Development Co.	JD 1,000	100	1.300	1.250	1.250	1.250	1.200	1.350
Jordan Tanning Co.	JD 5,000	369	7.100	7.250	7.250	7.250	—	—
Arab Aluminium Factory	JD 1,000	380	0.950	0.950	0.950	0.950	—	1.000
Jordan Electricity Co.	JD 1,000	541	1.350	1.400	1.400	1.400	—	1.400
Jordan Cement Factory	JD 10,000	3,657	15.900	15.900	15.900	15.900	—	15.950
Jordan Petroleum Co.	JD 5,000	2,260	6.850	6.850	6.805	6.850	—	6.900
Jordan Phosphate Mines Co.	JD 1,000	270	2.100	2.100	2.100	2.100	2.100	2.150
75 per cent of share capital paid.								
Total volume traded Monday, Feb. 27 : JD 9,997								

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BUSINESS SUPPLIES

Saudi Arabia puts ceiling on light crude oil output

NICOSIA, Cyprus, Feb. 27 (AP). — Saudi Arabia has placed a ceiling on its production of Arabian light crude oil for 1978, a well-informed weekly magazine reported today. The Middle East Economy

THE HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT AMMAN — JORDAN

Request international contractors interested in bidding on any or all of the below listed construction packages, apply for prequalification to its manager for Queen Alia International Airport Project:

Queen Alia International Airport Project
Ministry of Transport
P.O. Box (17101),
Amman — Jordan.
Telex 1540 — ANIA — JO

1. Navais include supply-installation-testing-guarantee of operation-certificate by official flight check according to International Rules (ICAO). (complete turn key job system).

1-1 Instrument landing system cat. II can be up-graded to cat. III.

1-2 VHF - omnidirectional range (VOR) colocated with distance measuring equipment, D.M.E.

1-3 Non-directional radio beacon.

2. Meteorological and associated weather measuring equipment.

3. Air traffic control systems consist of the following:

3-1 ATC desk equipped with radio channels, panel for direct telephone lines, intercom lines, meteorological equipment, digital clocks, provision for future radar display. Panels for monitoring ILS, VOR - DME and NDB shall be coordinated with the Navais. With all related central and associated equipment, cables, wires.

— No break power supply system.

3-2 Air to ground VHF and UHF radio sub-system complete with remote and local control equipment, to be connected to the control desk with all associated cables, wires and no break power supply.

3-3 Multi channel recorder to record all channels.

3-4 Microwave link between QAIP and the receiving station main and hot standby with 48 channels complete system.

3-5 All necessary teleprinters and associated equipment (system).

4. Airport ground communications system include the following:

— Private automatic branch exchange.
— Land mobil radio services.
— Complete system with cables, wires, telephone sets, portable transceivers, repeaters.

5. Public address systems.

Flight information displays.

Closed circuit T.V. surveillance system with all inside and outside cables, wires and associated equipment.

6. Air field lighting system includes-supply-installation-testing-guarantee of operation-hand-over (turn key job) of the following:

6-1 Air field lighting cat. II consist of:
Runway edge lighting. Runway centre line and touch down zone light. Precision approach cat. II, modified culvert system, three bars VASI, taxiway edge and centre line lighting. Apron flood lights, markers, wind cone illumination, hold position sign / stop bars, identification beacon etc. Local and remote control.

6-2 All inside and outside plant. Cables wires and associated control equipment, solid state constant current regulators and other associated equipment for the above including cat. II short break standby power system. According to ICAO document.

7. Control tower cab.

— Shall be of modular structure.
— Shall house the air traffic control facilities with an area between 50 - 60 square metres. The cab shall have a mechanical room with about the same area to house radio and other equipment.
— The cab shall be air conditioned to environmental conditions.
— The floor of the cab will be 35 metres roughly above the level of the ground.

Contractors who previously submitted prequalification for this work are required to re-apply for prequalification under this notice.

Applications for prequalification shall be submitted before noon on April 8, 1978.

Minister of Transport

Survey, which is published in Nicosia, said the implications of the move were not certain but it "will no doubt have a significant effect on marketing patterns in the Arabian Gulf." The report said the Saudi government had directed the Arabian American oil company (Aramco) to limit its output of Arabian light crude so as not to exceed 65 per cent of total crude oil production in 1978. Last year, Arabian light accounted for 72 per cent of Aramco's oil production. In January, it rose above 76 per cent.

The newsletter said it was uncertain whether the limitation applied to Aramco's actual production of 7.6 million barrels a day or to the 8.5 million barrels a day allowance on total production imposed at the start of the year. If the ruling applies to actual production -- as seems likely -- the effects would be more severe since Arabian light accounted for 5.8 million of the 7.6 million barrels a day produced in January, according to the newsletter. In such events the limitation would mean an overall production cut of 900,000 barrels a day. The newsletter assured that the ruling "involves only 34 degree API Arabian light and does not include the lighter 39 degree API Arabian berry, which generally accounts for about 7-8 per cent of production."

It speculated that the limitation was meant "to boost output of the heavier crudes, which will constitute the bulk of Saudi Arabia's incremental availability in future years." Aramco produces nearly 98 per cent of Saudi Arabia's total crude oil output. The Saudi government currently owns 60 per cent of Aramco and is preparing to purchase the remaining 40 per cent from its American partners -- Standard Oil of California, Texaco, and Mobil.

Dollar rises sharply

ZURICH, Feb. 27 (R). — The dollar rose sharply today after Switzerland announced yet another set of measures aimed at stemming the rise of the strong Swiss franc.

The new measures, announced by the Finance Ministry, banned non-resident foreigners from buying domestic securities, and limited imports of foreign banknotes.

Last Friday, the Swiss National Bank cut the bank rate from one per cent to 1.5 per cent. The cut in the already minimal interest rate meant that Swiss francs would become less attractive to hold.

On the Zurich Foreign Exchange, the dollar went up quickly to 1.3775 Swiss francs. It had been trading at around 1.3355 Swiss francs.

The restriction on foreign banknotes announced today limited individuals to importing no more than the equivalent of 20,000 Swiss francs (about \$11,000) a quarter.

Foreign business finds difficulty opening Japanese import doors

By Stephen Bronte

TOKYO, (F.T.). — After months of steady pressure from the U.S. and the EEC, Japan finally appears willing to open up its home market to imports from overseas.

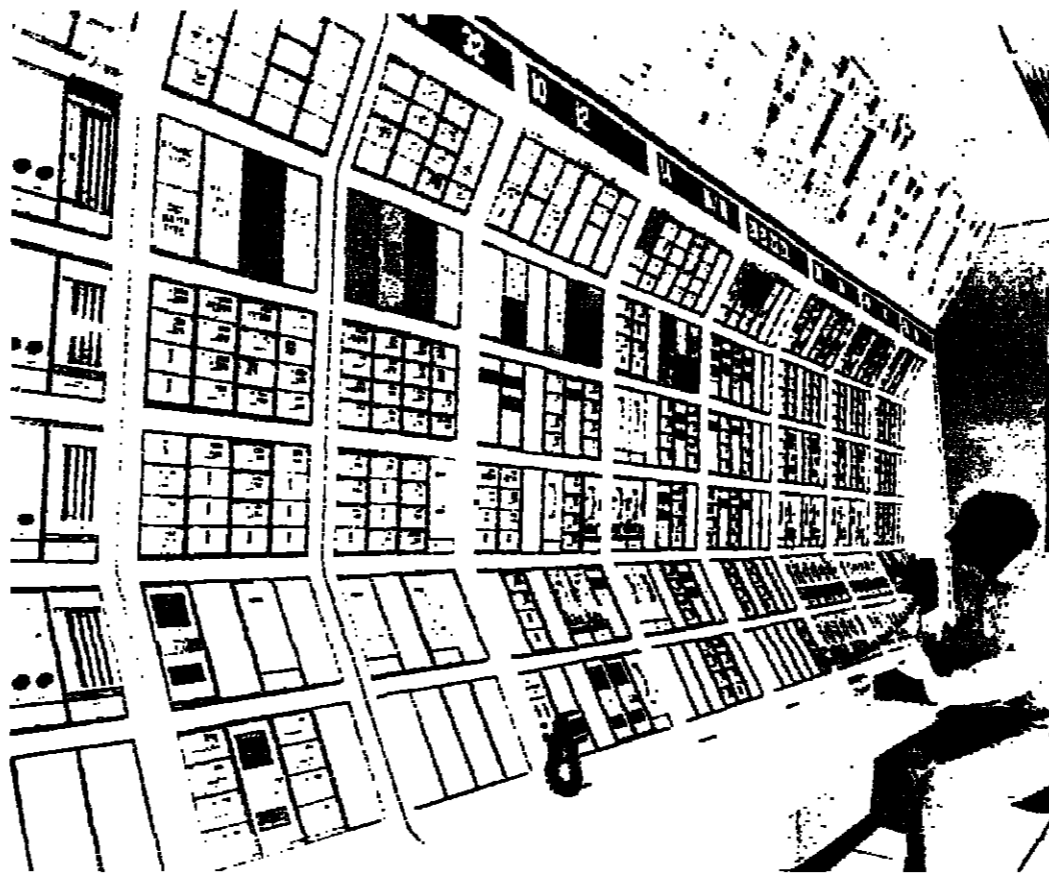
The government offered in January to reduce tariffs on 2,630 industrial products by a weighted average of 42 per cent. Cuts on 318 imports will be effective from April 1. The import duty on automobiles is to be eliminated completely. In all, the reductions will affect imports that were worth \$20 billion in 1977.

But foreign businessmen here have yet to uncork their bottles of champagne and celebrate. For they know that even if all import duties were eliminated tomorrow, the level of imported manufactured goods would be scarcely affected.

A car costing \$4,000 in the U.S. sells over \$10,000 in Japan and the elimination of a 6.4 per cent import duty is not likely to cause a flood of foreign imports. Foreign goods have been kept out of Japan for so long that it will take more than a ministerial decree to open up the doors. Last year Japan's imports amounted to \$61.81 billion, a record high. The bulk of these imports were raw materials, with crude oil accounting for more than 40 per cent of the total. Other major imports were foodstuffs (16 per cent), coal (6 per cent), and wood (6 per cent). The largest category of imported manufactured goods was machinery, which accounted for only 8 per cent of Japan's imports.

Last November the U.S. government sent a negotiating team to Tokyo to pressure the Japanese into increasing imports and righting the huge trade imbalance that exists between the two countries (\$8 billion last year). They made it clear that the only way Japan could

Operator directs pill production from "mission control"



Although this man may appear to be directing a space mission, he is actually operating the first large-scale computer-controlled manufacturing facility for medicinal tablets in the United States. It is part of the new Merck Sharp & Dohme Pharmaceutical Laboratories in Elkton, Virginia. (IPS photo)

U.S. coal miners' acceptance of new contract hangs in balance

WASHINGTON, Feb. 27 (R).

— Rank-and-file acceptance of a contract to end America's longest ever coal strike was still in the balance yesterday, judged by early reaction from the coalfields.

Labour Secretary Ray Marshall predicted acceptance by the miners as union leaders mounted a drive to sell the agreement reached last Friday -- 81st day of the strike --

between the United Mine Workers (UMW) and the Bituminous Coal Operators Association (BCOA).

But officials acknowledged they will have their work cut out to win rank-and-file endorsement, even though the contract is widely seen outside the industry as a workers' victory.

One early indication of trouble was the weekend rejection of a separate agreement with an independent coal operator, negotiated only a few days before the main agreement for which it served as a model.

The agreement with the Pittsburgh and Midway (P. and M.) Coal Mining Company, a subsidiary of the giant Gulf Oil Corporation, was turned down by a 2-1 vote of its 700 employees.

But union officials said it was not as good as the UMW-BCOA agreement and the P. and M. miners wanted their contract brought into line.

Asked on the CBS television programme Face the Nation, if he believed the larger

agreement would be ratified by the UMW's 160,000 members, Mr. Marshall replied: "I think it will."

He said the Carter administration did not plan to campaign for the settlement, which it helped bring out by exerting considerable pressure on the owners to accede to most of the miners' demands.

District officials from the Mid-Western and Appalachian coal areas headed for Washington this weekend to be briefed on details of the settlement, which they will then explain to their members before balloting in a week's time.

Militant groups in Kentucky and West Virginia have already declared their opposition to the agreement and growing opposition to UMW President Arnold Miller which will make the task for union officials even more difficult.

Mr. Miller fuelled militant demands for his resignation when he negotiated an earlier agreement with the BCOA that the UMW Bargaining Council overwhelmingly rejected.

People in the News

Norton named Fighter of the Year

NEW YORK, (AP). — Ken Norton, who shook off a controversial title loss to Mohammad Ali in 1976 with three victories last year, was named Sunday Fighter of the Year for 1977 by the Boxing Writers Association. Mr. Norton, the No. 1-ranked heavyweight contender, solidified that rating in 1977 by knocking out previously unbeaten Duane Bobick in 58 seconds, knocking out Lorenzo Zanon in five rounds, then scoring a split 15-round decision over no. 2 Jimmy Young Nov. 5. Negotiations currently are underway for North title shot against champion Leon Spinks in May or June.

Princess Grace makes a comeback

PITTSBURGH, Pennsylvania (AP). — Monaco's Princess Grace returned to the American stage Sunday and captured the hearts of nostalgic fans and new admirers with a programme of poetry on "birds, beasts and flowers." Members of the audience, whose attire included fur coats, black ties, tennis shoes and ski jackets, were the first Americans to see the former Grace Kelly of Philadelphia on a U.S. stage in 26 years. Princess Grace, whose last stage appearance was in the 1952 New York performance of To Be Continued, shared the stage at Carnegie Music Hall with Actor Richard Pasco of the Royal Shakespeare Company. Princess Grace will follow her Pittsburgh premiere with presentations at Minneapolis, her native Philadelphia, Washington, D.C. and Princeton and Harvard universities.

Exorcist victim is exhumed

ASCHAFFENBURG, West Germany, (AP). — The body of a 23-year-old woman who died in 1976 after undergoing exorcism was exhumed after a nun had a vision the body was mysteriously intact, police said Sunday. A police statement said the body of Anneliese Michel was dug up Saturday from a cemetery in this north Bavarian city but found to be "normally decayed". The priests, Ernst Alt and Wilhelm Renz, conducted the exorcism in a church-approved attempt to free Miss Michel from demons after four years of medical treatment failed to control her ailment. She died July 1, 1976 from lack of nourishment after several months of exorcism rites conducted at her home, police said. During the rites, she refused food and her weight dropped to 70 pounds before her death. Prosecutor Karl Stenger said his investigation showed Miss Michel's life could have been saved if "medical help had been sought."

If he smite you in the face, turn to him your colleague's ear?

WEST BERLIN, (R). — A man punched a judge in the ear here this week -- while he was on trial for punching another judge in the face. The man, Ronald Fritzsche, leapt to his feet, dealt the judge a blow in the left ear during a hearing into charges that he attacked the other judge in the middle of a court case in February last year. Mr. Fritzsche now faces a further charge of assaulting a judge. He is awaiting trial on charges connected with the murder of a judge in 1974 and the kidnapping of West Berlin politician Peter Lorenz in 1975.

Henry Ford II files for divorce

DETROIT, (AP). — Auto magnate Henry Ford II, legally separated from his wife Christina since mid-December, has filed for divorce, according to documents released Friday. Mr. Ford filed for divorce in Wayne County Circuit Court on Jan. 23, the court documents show. Mrs. Ford asked that the documents be kept secret last Dec. 16, when she requested a legal separation and a court order that her husband maintain her accustomed lifestyle. Mr. Ford's divorce claim, filed in response to his wife's request, does not give a reason for the divorce. Michigan's no-fault divorce law allows married couples to get a divorce if the relationship has deteriorated beyond help. The Fords were married in 1965 and began living apart in December, 1975.

Kuwait sets up committee to consider steps to counter effect of \$'s fall

KUWAIT, Feb. 27 (AP). — The Kuwaiti cabinet decided today to set up a ministerial committee to consider steps to counter the effects of the declining value of the dollar on this country's oil revenues. Abdul Aziz Hussein, Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs, told newsmen after the session that the special committee would consist of the ministers of finance, oil, planning and commerce. It is to report back to the full cabinet within two weeks. Mr. Hussein said Finance Minister Abdul Rahman Alajaj and Oil Minister Ali Khalifa Al Sabah reported on the problem at today's session. Kuwaiti leaders have warned that, unless the United States bolstered the dollar, the Gulf emirate and other members of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries would seek an alternative to the U.S. currency as the basis for computing oil prices.

FOREIGN EXCHANGE RATES

London, Feb. 27 (R). — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies against the dollar at the close of inter-bank trading on the London foreign exchange market today. Tourist rates will differ from those quoted below.

	U.S. dollars
One sterling	1.9320/30
One dollar	2.0500/20
	2.1945/65
	1.8850/8900
	31.89/94
	4.7525/75
	854.00/50
	239.20/40
	West German marks
	Dutch guilders
	Swiss francs
	Belgian francs
	French francs
	Italian lire
	Japanese yen

LONDON MARKET REPORT

Stock prices closed lower Monday, continuing last week's easier trend in slow trading, dealers said. At 15:00 the F.T. index was down 4.2 at 440.0.

Market sentiment was also depressed by week-end press comment on the economic outlook for Britain and forecasts of lower North Sea oil revenues. Government bonds finished a net one point lower and gold shares eased with the bullion price.

However, Australian, U.S. and Canadian stocks firmed. Leading industrials cut earlier losses to finish above the day's lows.

Glaxo, Unilever, GEC, Turner and Newall and Bowater lost between 2p and 3p, while Beecham, EMI and Lucas each shed 4p. Fisons, Bats Industries, Tube Investments, GRN and Shell finished up to 3p higher after being up to 4p. lower at the outset.

Price of gold closed in London Monday at \$198.75/oz.

LOCAL EXCHANGE RATES

	Jordanian fils
Buying/Selling	310.00/312.00
U.S. dollar	602.00/606.00
U.K. sterling	151.50/152.40
W. German mark	167.60/168.50
Swiss franc	64.10/64.50
French franc	
Italian lire (for every 100)	36.20/36.40
Japanese yen (for every 100)	129.40/130.20
Dutch guilder	141.50/142.30
Belgian franc (for every ten)	87.60/88.20
Swedish crown	67.00/67.40

Gandhi's party wins state election; rival Congress head resigns

NEW DELHI, Feb. 27 (Agencies). — Official Congress Party President Brahmananda Reddy today resigned because of his party's dismal performance in yesterday's elections in the southern India State of Karnataka where former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's breakaway Congress faction won a stunning victory. Mr. Reddy's resignation was a result of his responsibility for the defeat of his party in Karnataka, he said today.

According to latest results from Karnataka, Mrs. Gandhi's party has won an absolute majority of 152 in the 224-member assembly, with all results declared.

The official Congress Party has won only two seats, while India's national ruling Janata Party has captured 58. The remaining 12 seats went to minor parties, Communists and Independents.

Mrs. Gandhi's faction of is thus assured of the right to

form a new government in the southern state.

Mrs. Gandhi was not a candidate in Karnataka State, but had campaigned hard there and in four other states which held elections.

Prime Minister Morarji Desai had visited Karnataka state to campaign against Mrs. Gandhi.

"Indira Congress" was also leading in the nation's four other state elections. Vote counting continued today with re-

sults expected late tonight or tomorrow.

Mr. Reddy became Congress president last summer following Mrs. Gandhi's general election defeat and her withdrawal from politics.

He was Mrs. Gandhi's choice, but when she began her political comeback last August he refused to step aside and allow her to become president.

She began an internal Congress battle last month, splitting the 92-year-old party, and was elected president of a breakaway group that declared itself the real Congress.

Mrs. Gandhi's strong showing in Karnataka was expected, but the poor performance by the rival Congress surprised most observers.

Defeat of the rival faction was seen as crucial for Mrs. Gandhi's party, which is trying to establish a comeback after its defeat by Mr. Desai's Janata forces last year.

The victory was seen as a rebuff to the Janata, which last Dec. 31 dissolved the pro-Gandhi state government on allegations of corruption and of having lost public confidence.

Shah orders Tabriz officials punished

TEHRAN, Feb. 27 (R). — The Shah of Iran has ordered the prosecution and punishment of officials who failed to anticipate the riots in the north-western city of Tabriz, a week ago, during which nine people were killed and 125 injured, a government spokesman announced here yesterday.

The Shah's orders were issued after he received a report from the senior team of inspectors he sent to Tabriz to probe the incidents, the spokesman said.

The government spokesman denied foreign reports that sc-

ores of people had been killed during the riots, reiterating that only nine people had been killed in Tabriz.

He also denied reports that a state of siege had been declared in Tabriz, adding that life had returned to normal after the two-day rioting.

Two U.S. gas mishaps kill 20

NEW YORK, Feb. 27 (AP). — Three more people died from burns suffered in a railroad tank car explosion in Tennessee while a derailment in Florida

that spewed chlorine gas killed eight as the toll from the two accidents rose over the weekend to 20 dead and more than 100 injured.

In Waverly, Tennessee, the death toll rose from nine to 12 yesterday following Friday's liquid propane explosion. Waverly's police and fire chiefs were among the dead.

Earlier yesterday, a freight train was derailed near the Florida panhandle town Youngs-town, rupturing a tanker carrying liquid chlorine, which vapourised and spread a yellow-green cloud across a nearby highway. Eight people died and 67 were taken to hospitals.

About 2,500 residents of an 200 sq. kms. area of rural north Florida were evacuated and told it would not be safe to return before today.

Investigators in Waverly said that the walls of the tank car that carried the propane may have weakened before the blast. The car had derailed two days earlier.

"That theory is one that we may settle on," said Mr. Phillip L. Hooper, Louisville and Nashville Railroad Company Vice President for Tennessee.

Only hours after workers successfully completed draining volatile propane from a second derailed tank car in Waverly, a 104-unit freight train carrying hazardous materials went off the tracks 88 kms. west in a rural area near the tiny cotton gin town of Cades.

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A Parisian motorcyclist takes time off during the weekend to examine the first of the party posters to appear in the French capital announcing the start of the campaign for next month's National Assembly elections. (AP wirephoto)

Eritrean groups say Cubans aid Ethiopia in northern war also

ROME, Feb. 27 (AP). — Heavy fighting has flared up in the past week in an Ethiopian attempt to break a siege on the Eritrean capital of Asmara. One of the two guerrilla groups struggling for independence said today there are as many as 1,000 Cuban troops involved in the battle.

A spokesman for the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF), said his organisation's intelligence inside Asmara has discovered that Cuban troops are manning heavy ar-

tillery and rocket launchers. He said Ethiopian airlines cancelled all commercial flights for a week to bring in Cuban troops from Angola and other points.

The spokesman, and another spokesman for the rival Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF), both reported heavy fighting in the Feb. 20-25 period to the south of the Eritrean capital, under siege by guerrilla troops since late last year.

Both guerrilla groups claimed that the Ethiopian thrust had been halted at heavy losses to the government troops, although their accounts of the fighting differed in detail.

The ELF spokesman said his forces halted the Ethiopians nine kms. south of Asmara around a small village named Sela Darro. He said 390 enemy soldiers were killed in one day

of fighting on Feb. 25, 84 were captured, three tanks were destroyed and a Soviet-built MIG 21 was shot down. The pilot was not found.

U.S. intelligence has reported that Cubans are flying the Soviet planes in strikes against Somali-backed guerrillas in the Ogaden region of south-east Ethiopia. They have said that more than 10,000 Cuban troops, several thousand Soviets and other foreign troops are helping the Ethiopians, with the Cubans involved directly in the fighting in the Ogaden.

The EPLF spokesman said the Ethiopians broke through areas controlled by the ELF and were met by EPLF forces at Adi Gombollo, about 20 kms. south of Asmara. He said the Ethiopians were forced to retreat towards Asmara after several days of battle.

Major decisions due as Chinese parliament opens 2nd day of meet

PEKING, Feb. 27 (R). — China's parliament met for the second day today to discuss a report, delivered yesterday by Communist Party Chairman Hua Kuo-feng, on the work of government which called for a big increase in technological expertise.

Nearly 3,500 delegates are attending the National People's Congress, the fifth since the communist state was founded in 1949.

It opened yesterday in Peking's Great Hall of the People with Mr. Hua's three-and-a-half hour speech.

The congress is also due to consider a new ten-year economic plan and a report on revisions to the Constitution, and to elect state leaders.

The Fifth National People's Congress meets amid a general feeling of optimism reflected in the official press that things are going well in the country after more than a decade of political and industrial turmoil.

An editorial carried by the

People's Daily, and the Liberation Army Daily yesterday said a great victory had been won in the campaign against extremist influence in the country, while a new leap forward in the economy was emerging.

"Things are going much better than expected," said the editorial, echoing the words of Chairman and Premier Hua.

Looking back over the past three years, which saw the deaths of Chairman Mao Tse-tung and Premier Chou En-lai and the power struggle with the extremist "gang of four" headed by Mao's widow Chiang Ching, the editorial said:

"What severe tests we went through, what arduous struggles and what great victories we scored during these three breath-taking years."

It added: "Our land is bright with sunshine and everyone is in high spirits, showing unprecedented socialist initiative."

North Sea rig blast kills 5

STAVANGER, Norway Feb. 27 (AP). — Five Norwegians died in a fire on one of the world's largest oil drilling rigs late Saturday night, a spokesman for the state-owned firm Statoil said yesterday.

The fire broke out on the tower of the Statfjord-A oil rig operated in the North Sea by Mobil Oil Company, said Mr. Arne Halvorsen of Statoil, which owns the installation.

The cause of the fire was not known. The blaze was brought under control by the rig's crew.

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Spain slams OAU's independence stand on Canary Islands

MADRID, Feb. 27 (R). — Spain has accused the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) of undertaking an intolerable interference in Spanish internal affairs by declaring support for an independence movement in the Canary Islands.

The OAU Council of Ministers, meeting in the Libyan capital of Tripoli, adopted on Saturday a recommendation by its Liberation Committee to aid separatist guerrillas in the Canaries.

A statement issued by the Spanish Foreign Ministry yesterday said Spain had protested firmly and energetically to all the OAU member states that voted for the recommendation.

It also said Spain would take measures to prevent the council's decision from being ratified at the meeting of OAU heads of state in Khartoum next June.

No details of the measures were given. But Defence Minister Lt.-Gen. Manuel Gutierrez Mellado said on Thursday Spain would defend the Canaries "no matter what is said and no matter what happens."

Foreign Minister Marcelino Oreja said he would call the Madrid ambassadors of OAU member countries to his office early this week to register a strong protest at last night's decision.

Senor Oreja said Spanish ambassadors in the OAU countries that had voted for the council's decision had also been instructed to make firm and energetic protests.

"The Canary Islands are not an African affair and should not have been considered by the OAU," Senor Oreja said.

Informed sources said diplomatic relations between Spain and certain OAU countries could be severely damaged if the OAU heads of state ratify the

Council of Ministers decision. Spanish officials today accused Algeria of instigating the OAU move and said it was unlikely the Spanish ambassador, recalled from Algiers for consultations last December, would return to his post.

Human rights all but kill Belgrade meet

BELGRADE, Feb. 27 (R). — Neutral nations pressed again today for a face-saving formula to enable the deadlocked European security conference to end without further arguments about human rights.

Gloomy diplomats anxious to go home after 17 weeks of debate said there was no hope of a final political declaration acceptable to all three groups, East, West and neutrals.

The neutral attempt was virtually killed last night when NATO nations finally rejected a neutral draft declaration on grounds that it was unbalanced by ignoring human rights.

Western delegations immediately began efforts to wind-up the conference, already two weeks behind schedule, by seeking what they called the "only possible solution", probably a laconic communique that will say nothing politically contentious.

The 35-nation conference has stopped debating any of the real issues involved in East-West détente, and is now seeking only to find suitable language for a closing document.

World News Briefs

Tunisia lifts state of emergency

TUNIS, Feb. 27 (R). — The Tunisian government on Saturday night lifted a state of emergency imposed last month after bloody clashes swept the capital. The announcement by the Interior Ministry came as the country's only trade union organisation, the UGTT, opened a one-day extraordinary congress. Its purpose is to elect new leaders to replace those in detention. Ten members of the 13-man Executive were detained when they were held responsible for the Tunis disturbances during a one-day general strike called by the union on Jan. 26.

Pakistan arrests 25 protesting saboteurs

KARACHI, Feb. 27 (R). — Police arrested 25 people after they tried to blow up a railway line on Saturday in protest against the arrest of Sind Province leader Mackdood. Khalique Zaman, an official statement said yesterday. The statement said the group also sabotaged an irrigation canal, flooding about 40 hectares of land and damaging 555 houses. The incident, at Shah-burkhar, 320 kms. north of here, followed the conviction in nearby Hala on Friday of 50 Mackdood followers of arson, looting and demonstrating. All were given one-year prison sentences with 27 also ordered to be whipped.

South African black leader dies

KIMBERLEY, South Africa Feb. 27 (AP). — Civil rights leader Robert Sobukwe, head of the outlawed Pan Africanist Congress, died in the Kimberley Hospital, his family announced today. Mr. Sobukwe had suffered from lung cancer. He underwent chest surgery in Cape Town late last year. Mr. Sobukwe, an internationally respected black nationalist leader, became a symbol of this white-ruled country's system of detention without trial.

Ex-veep claims Colombian poll victory

BOGOTA, Colombia Feb. 27 (AP). — Former Vice President Julio Cesar Turbay Ayala claimed victory today in primary elections to choose a presidential candidate for the ruling Liberal Party. The nation's radio networks picked Mr. Ayala to win after unofficial results showed him with 177,789 votes against 118,004 for former President Carlos Lleras Restrepo. Political analysts predicted Mr. Ayala's victory because he was reported to be favoured by the administration of President Alfonso Lopez Michelsen, 65, running again. The presidential election is on June 4. A primary victory would give Mr. Ayala a good chance to win a four-year term beginning in 1978, analysts said.

Filipino rebels said kidnap Frenchman

MANILA, Feb. 27 (R). — A French Embassy counsellor flew to the southern Philippines today to help in the search for a French official believed kidnapped by Muslim rebels near Zamboanga city. M. Pierre Huguet, 59, a Sub-Director of the French Ministry of Finance, was last seen yesterday. M. Huguet, who was holidaying in the Philippines with his wife, is the sixth kidnap victim of the Muslim rebels in a week and the second foreigner taken since the beginning of the year.

More on crashed Soviet satellite

EDMONTON, Canada Feb. 27 (AP). — Debris found in the southwestern Great Slave Lake region might be residue from the reactor core of a fallen Soviet Cosmos satellite, a Canadian armed forces spokesman said on Saturday night. Scientists say they have been studying small, pepper-grain sized pieces of debris recovered last week. Maj. Vic Keating said in a prepared statement. The nuclear-powered satellite re-entered the earth's atmosphere and crashed in the northwest Territories on Jan. 24.

Scientific progress accused New Jersey surgeon of murder

HACKENSACK, New Jersey, Feb. 27 (R). — An Argentine-born surgeon goes on trial today charged with murdering five people by injecting them with lethal doses of a poison once favoured by South American Indians.

The surgeon is Dr. Mario Jascalevich. The poison is curare, which in small doses is used in modern medicine as a muscle relaxant but in larger quantities it can relax breathing muscles to the point of fatal paralysis.

Dr. Jascalevich is accused of injecting curare into the five patients at the tiny Riverdell Hospital in Oradell, New Jersey, in 1966 as they either recuperated normally from operations or were about to undergo surgery.

The first order of business in what promises to be a lengthy trial is the selection of a jury. Dr. Jascalevich's attorneys will seek to prove that, because of pre-trial publicity, an impartial jury cannot be found in Bergen County, a wealthy suburb of New York City.

Prosecution lawyers have an extremely difficult task in front of them. They must first prove that the victims died of curare overdoses and then that these were administered by Dr. Jascalevich, a highly-respected surgeon.

The prosecutors are expected to call several of America's top forensic scientists but medical experts are debating whether curare can be detected in a person after death.

The Bergen County Prosecutor's Office dropped its initial investigation in 1966 after medical experts said curare could not be detected in body tissue after death.

The case was reopened a decade later, following a series of investigative reports on the case by the New York Times. The prosecutor Joseph Woodcock, said in 1976 that science had progressed to the point where curare's presence could be determined.

After five bodies were exhumed and curare found in two of them, Dr. Jascalevich was indicted in all the deaths.

The prosecution is expected to contend that Dr. Jascalevich was either insane or jealous of competing surgeons at the 81-bed Riverdell Hospital.

The doctor claims he is innocent and that 24 vials of curare found in his locker at Riverdell were used by him only in experiments he conducted on dogs to develop new surgical techniques.

When the story first broke, Dr. Jascalevich's name was withheld and he was referred to in newspapers as "Doctor X". He is a 50-year-old surgeon of Italian and Yugoslav parentage who trained as a doctor in Buenos Aires.

He had an excellent surgical reputation in the northern New Jersey area. He voluntarily relinquished his practice after the state said it would try to prove him a murderer.

Curare was supplied to American U-2 spy-plane pilot Francis Gary Powers to use if he was caught. But Powers, who was captured after crashing in the Soviet Union in 1960 never used it.

The drug creates a sense of terror in its victims as they feel themselves suddenly paralysed and unable to breathe.

Poll shows most Americans oppose Mideast plane sales

By Evans Witt

WASHINGTON, Feb. 27 (AP). — U.S. President Jimmy Carter's plan to sell sophisticated warplanes to three Middle Eastern nations, including Israel, is opposed by most of the American people, an Associated Press-NBC News poll shows.

More than three out of five Americans are against at least one section of the proposed warplane sales to Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Israel. Only one piece of the sale — planes for Israel — is supported by as many as 24 per cent of the 1,600 adults questioned.

The findings reflect a sentiment among many Americans for less U.S. involvement in the affairs of the Middle East as may indicate public disenchantment with the U.S. role as an arms merchant.

President Carter proposed the \$4.8 billion plane sales package to the three countries on Feb. 14. The proposal represents a major U.S. policy shift in its arms sales to Egypt.

Opinions about the sales to each country were asked as separate questions in telephone interviews last Tuesday and Wednesday.

On the sale of 90 sophisticated F-15 and F-16 fighters to Israel, 63 per cent were opposed. Only 14 per cent said they favoured the deal. Thirteen per cent were undecided.

Selling 50 less advanced F-5E fighters to Egypt drew support from 21 per cent of those questioned. Sixty-six per cent opposed the sale, with 13 per cent again undecided.

No to one; no to all

Seventeen per cent favoured the sale of 60 F-15 fighters to Saudi Arabia with 69 per cent opposed. Fourteen per cent were not sure.

Those who opposed sales to one nation were quite likely to oppose sales to all of the countries. Fifty-seven per cent of those interviewed said they opposed all of the plane sales.

On the other side, the picture was not as clear, but the trend was similar: those who supported plane sales to one country were likely to support sales to the other two. For example, of those who supported sales to Israel, 68 per cent supported selling planes to Egypt, versus 26 per cent who were against the Egyptian deal.

The same group — those who favoured the sale to Israel — agreed with the sale to Saudi Arabia by a 57-36 per cent margin.

Other questions on the Middle East showed a desire for less U.S. involvement and a deterioration of support for the Israeli bargaining position.

Asked whether the U.S. should pressure Israel or Egypt into concessions, only 6 per cent said this country should pressure Israel and only 2 per cent agreed with pressure on Egypt.

Twenty-one per cent said both countries should feel the weight of U.S. influence, while 62 per cent thought the United States should avoid leaning on either side.

Begin loses popularity

Disenchantment with the Israelis was found in three questions.

First, 55 per cent said President Anwar Sadat of Egypt had made more concessions than Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin while 15 per cent felt Mr. Begin had made more concessions. Eight per cent thought both sides had yielded, while 22 per cent were not sure.

This perception of Mr. Begin's lack of concessions has had a negative effect on his standing with the American people. Only 29 per cent now give him "excellent" or "good" ratings for his role as a Mideast peace negotiator, down 20 points from the 49 per cent found in the January AP-NBC News poll.

In contrast, Mr. Sadat received "excellent" or "good" marks from 56 per cent of the American public, down about nine points from his January result.

As with any public survey, the results of the AP-NBC News poll can vary from the exact opinions of all Americans with telephone calls solely because of chance variations in the sample.

For a poll of 1,600 adults, the variation due to sampling error is no more than three percentage points either way. The error margin is said to be valid at the 95 per cent confidence level. This means that, if the same questions were repeated in 20 surveys the results of at least 19 surveys would be within three percentage points of the results of this survey.